



Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) and the 1% Threshold Justification: Tiered System of LEA Oversight and Monitoring

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires Pennsylvania to ensure that the total number of students assessed in each subject using the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) does not exceed one percent of the total number of all students in the state assessed on the statewide assessments. In addition, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) requires every state to develop a State Performance Plan (SPP) which describes how states are improving educational outcomes for students with disabilities and complying with the IDEA. Student participation and performance on statewide assessments (SPP Indicator 3) includes a 95 percent participation target for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) participating in statewide assessments.

Pennsylvania implements a 3-tiered system of oversight and monitoring to address 1.0 percent compliance with local education agencies (LEAs) across the Commonwealth. More information on PASA Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) eligibility and the state's 3-tiered system of oversight and monitoring can be accessed on the Bureau of Special Education Assessment page: [ESSA 1.0 Percent Threshold Justification Requirements \(pa.gov\)](#)

TIER DESCRIPTIONS, SUBMISSION DIRECTIONS, AND SURVEY QUESTION

TIER DESCRIPTIONS

Tier 1 (Universal):

ALL LEAs are required to submit alternate statewide assessment participation data to the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) annually. LEAs who were under the 1% in the most recent testing year and who do not plan to exceed the 1% threshold in the upcoming testing cycle will submit their demographic information and assurance only. Those who exceeded last year and/or plan to exceed the 1% this year are required to submit responses to a series of justification questions identified in the 1% threshold survey via the LEA customized link provided.

A list of LEAs who anticipate exceeding the threshold will be made publicly available on the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) website, in accordance with 34 CFR 200.6 (c)(3). Any LEA that exceeds the 1.0 percent threshold may be subject to further review by BSE.

Tier 2 (Targeted):

Tier 2 LEAs are identified based upon higher rates of PASA participation in the most recent testing year and required to submit responses to all the 1% threshold survey justification questions via the survey link and may be subject to additional on-site visits and/or file reviews as required by the BSE.

Tier 3 (Intensive):

Tier 3 LEAs are identified based upon excessively high rates of PASA participation in the most recent testing year and required to submit responses to all the 1% threshold survey justification questions via the survey link. In addition, these LEAs will work directly with a BSE representative to complete the Intensive Needs Review data protocol and submission of required IEPs. These LEAs are also subject to on-site visits and/or additional file reviews as determined by BSE.

SUBMISSION DIRECTIONS

1. The Special Education Administrator associated with the LEA will be sent two email notifications in September. The first will include the most recent year testing preliminary data and the LEA's identified tier. The second email will include a personalized link for the LEA to submit the required responses for their identified tier. The email with the personalized survey link will come from a 'SurveyMonkey' address, so LEAs should ensure their firewalls allow the email. (Note: assessment data will be final following federal submission).
2. Answer all required survey questions for your designated tier and submit by the deadline outlined in the email. The personalized survey link will guide the LEA to the appropriate tier questions and allow the user to edit and save responses prior to final submission. The electronic survey serves as the LEA's formal submission to BSE, and the LEA will receive electronic confirmation that the survey was successfully submitted and emailed a copy of the responses.

Note: the BSE will only accept 1% Threshold submissions via the survey link. Do not send emails with attachments.

1% THRESHOLD SURVEY QUESTIONS

All LEAs must provide the following information via the survey link:

1. Name of LEA (School Districts):
2. Name of LEA (Charter Schools):
3. Address of LEA:
4. LEA Contact Information (Name/Role/Email/Phone Number):
5. Review the LEA's participation rate in the most recent testing year provided by BSE. Compare this to the planned percentage of students the LEA will enroll for the upcoming testing cycle. What is the anticipated PASA percentage for the upcoming year? LEAs may access more information on the 1% calculation in the annual PASA Getting Ready training: [Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment \(PASA\)](#)

(1% or less (If <=1% in testing data and <=1% in anticipated data) go to assurances. Any LEA who exceeded 1% in most current testing data or those who anticipate being over 1% this year move on to more questions)

- >1% - 2%
- >2% - 3%
- >3% - 4%
- >4%

6. Review the anticipated students who will participate in the upcoming testing cycle, including students the LEA has placed with outside service providers. Provide the number of students eligible for PASA in each disability category.

Chapter 14 primary disability category below:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ Autism | _____ Multiple Disabilities |
| _____ Deaf-Blind | _____ Orthopedic Impairment |
| _____ Deafness | _____ Other Health Impairment |
| _____ Emotional Disturbance | _____ Speech / Language Impairment |
| _____ Hearing Impairment | _____ Traumatic Brain Injury |
| _____ Intellectual Disability | _____ Visual Impairment |
| _____ Specific Learning Disability | |

7. Does the LEA continue to have students participating in the PASA with disability categories that are not typically eligible for the PASA? (Typically, students with a primary disability category of specific learning disability, emotional disturbance or speech/language impairment only do not meet the definition of a significant cognitive disability.)

- Yes
- No

8. If the answer is 'yes', explain how IEP teams are determining these students meet all 6 PASA eligibility criteria. How will the LEA ensure IEP teams review these eligibility determinations prior to enrolling/ testing students for the PASA this year?

9. How is the LEA assuring that IEP Teams are adhering to the six criteria for all students when determining eligibility for participation in the PASA? (Check all that apply.)

___ The IEP team answers 'yes' to all six PASA eligibility criteria using the "[PASA Eligibility Criteria: Decision Making Companion Tool](#)".

___ The IEP team documents the decision for a student to participate in the PASA in section IV of the IEP, explaining specifically how all six of the PASA eligibility criteria have been met.

___ The Special Education Administrator ensures that necessary training and updates on PASA eligibility are shared with relevant staff members on an ongoing basis.

___ The IEP team does not base the decision for a student to participate in the PASA on classroom placement (e.g., not all students in a Life Skills Support program will qualify), EL status, administrative decision, or any of the other factors outlined in the eligibility criteria decision making companion tool.

___ Other (please describe)

10. Does the LEA have fewer than 100 students total in the tested accountability grades (3-8 and 11) participating in statewide assessments (PSSA, Keystone Exams, PASA)?

Yes (small overall N size may be a factor in exceeding the 1% threshold)

No

11. Provide any additional justification of variables not already noted above that may contribute to higher numbers of students being deemed eligible for participation in the PASA that would result in a PASA participation rate in excess of 1%. (Enter N/A if not applicable.)

12. Does the LEA project PASA participation rates to decrease, stay the same, or increase this year compared to last year?

Decrease

Stay the same

Increase

If the LEA projects and increase, provide an explanation:

13. Review the 95% participation rate provided to the LEA by BSE. How many students with disabilities participated in statewide assessment in the most recent testing year (students in grades 3-8 and 11 taking PSSA, Keystone Exams and PASA)?

95% or more

90 to <95%

85% to <90

<85%

14. If less than 95%, what does the LEA intend to do to improve participation of students with disabilities in the upcoming testing cycle? Remember to include students the LEA has placed with outside service providers.

Tier 1 skips to LEA Assurances. Tier 2 LEAs must also complete the additional questions below:

15. Does the LEA have PASA eligible students placed with outside service providers?

Yes

No

16. If the LEA has students placed with outside service providers, how does the LEA ensure PASA eligibility decisions are being made according to the state's eligibility criteria for students in these placements?

17. How will the IEP team reconsider the six eligibility criteria for students scoring at the advanced level on the PASA? (Enter N/A if no students scored at the advanced level).

18. How is the LEA providing training to relevant staff and stakeholders on PASA DLM eligibility and statewide assessment participation? LEAs may refer to the resources provided in the PASA Getting Ready PowerPoint slides.

Tier 3 LEAs must complete all questions on the survey and LEA assurances. In addition, Tier 3 LEAs will be contacted directly by a BSE representative for the additional requirements to include submission of an Intensive Needs Review data protocol and submission of student IEPs. The required action steps and timeline for submission of these additional steps will be identified by the BSE representative.

LEA Assurances:

The content and data in this document represent the LEA's justification and/or plan to address compliance with state assessment participation rates. It is understood that the State is not authorized to grant approval for an LEA to exceed the federally mandated 1.0 percent threshold or to excuse the LEA from the federal requirement to assess at least 95% of all students and students with disabilities.

*(LEA Representative) _____

*(Superintendent/ Chief School Administrator) _____

*Type the names into the electronic survey. Original signatures should be kept on file at the LEA.